

REMARKS

The present response amends claims 1, 9, and 14 in conformity with the following remarks. In addition, claims 2, 5, 12, and 16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer as to the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-11, 13-15, and 17-29 remain pending in the captioned case. Further examination and reconsideration of the presently claimed application are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-7, 10, 12-13, 16-17, 19, and 22-29 were deemed allowed. Claims 25-29 are dependent from non-rejected independent claim 24; thus, Applicants assert that claims 24-29 are allowable in their present form. Claims 5-7 are dependent from rejected independent claim 1; claims 10 and 12-13 are dependent from rejected independent claim 9; and claims 16-17, 19, 22, and 23 are dependent from rejected independent claim 14.

Applicants agree with the assessment given in the Office Action and appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the allowed subject matter from claim 5 and intervening claim 2 has been inserted into independent claim 1. In addition, the allowed subject matter from claim 12 has been inserted into independent claim 9. Still further, the allowed subject matter from claim 16 has been inserted into independent claim 14.

In light of the amendments herein, Applicants assert that independent claims 1, 9, 14, and 24, as well as the remaining pending claims dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

Section 102 Rejection

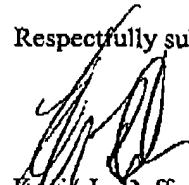
Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 18, 20, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,610,866 to McClure (hereinafter "McClure"). In response thereto, each of the rejected claims are not based on an amended independent claim that contains allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request removal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

The present amendment and response is believed to be a complete response to the issues raised in the Office Action mailed June 28, 2004. Applicants assert that pending claims 1, 3, 4, 6-11, 13-15, and 17-29 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, comments or suggestions, the undersigned attorney earnestly requests a telephone conference.

No fees are required for filing this amendment; however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Conley Rose, P.C. Deposit Account No. 50-3268/5298-05200.

Respectfully submitted,



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